

JUL 29 1977 •

DATE: July 27, 1977

TO : Professor Joshua Lederberg  
Department of Genetics

FROM : William F. Miller  
Vice President and Provost

SUBJECT:

Dear Josh:

I am following up the note you sent me on June 30th from Frank Press to you.

I had not heard about this activity of Ruth Davis' and to my knowledge we have not been contacted here at Stanford. I did hear that Ms. Davis was going to move from running the Computer Science and Technology Center at NBS into the Deputy Undersecretary position in DoD. That has not yet been confirmed, to my understanding, and so I don't know where she is--that is, whether she's still at NBS or already at DoD. I understood that she was occupying an office in the Pentagon already.

I would think that if the DoD is really interested in bridging the gulf, especially in the national security area, that some rather small meeting that would include faculty as well as university presidents would be in order. I'm not talking about a big conference, but a meeting of, say, fifteen or twenty people. I am not sure that the various Washington offices always understand what creates these gulfs; furthermore, they often do not have their own ideas about how to bridge them. All too often they think money is a sufficient bait or payment to get people to participate in various programs. Obviously, some of the more sophisticated leaders know otherwise. I would certainly be glad to participate in such a meeting, if I thought that it was going to be well run and would be attended by people who could have an impact on the policy concerning relationships with faculties and universities.

We may be about to undergo another round of technological change and innovation and if that is the case then I think that Frank Press is quite right--that is, that we need to have a knowledgeable group of experts outside the government who can give independent advice. The word "independent" should be underlined, because I think that quite a number of us have run into the

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situation where our government colleagues are seeking confirmation, not independent advice. At any rate, I concur that it is an important problem; I think a serious review of how to strengthen connections in the area of unclassified basic research is in order. I think it must be a serious review and done by such people as can get the attention of policy makers. I would be glad to participate.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bill".

William F. Miller  
Vice President and Provost